United Nations A/ES-10/508 S/2011/6

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
10 January 2011

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 7 January 2011 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

We write today to express our grave concern over the latest killings of Palestinian civilians by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. In this connection, the latest horrific attack against innocent Palestinian civilians occurred on 7 January 2011, in Al-Khalil (Hebron) when Israeli occupying forces carried out a highly aggressive and bloody raid against the home of the Al-Qawasmi family in Al-Sheikh neighbourhood and executed in cold blood 66-year-old Omar Salim Al-Qawasmi while he was sleeping in his bed.

In addition to the death of Al-Qawasmi, two more Palestinian civilians were killed by the Israeli occupying forces during the week. On 1 January 2011, 35-year-old Jawaher Abu Rahmah died after she inhaled a large amount of tear gas sprayed by Israeli occupying forces at the weekly peaceful demonstration in the village of Bil'in against Israel's illegal Wall, which has been built on confiscated Palestinian land, in violation of international law, international humanitarian law and human rights law as well as the International Court of Justice advisory opinion of 9 July 2004. Sadly and tragically, Jawaher Abu Rahmah is the sister of Bassem Abu Rahmah, who was shot and killed by the Israeli occupying forces with a tear gas canister in April 2009.

In another tragic incident, on 2 January 2011, Israeli occupying forces positioned at Al-Hamra military checkpoint, east of Tubas in the West Bank, shot and killed 25-year-old Ahmed Daraghma, while on his way to work. Reports, including those by the Israeli military, confirmed that Daraghma did not pose a threat against the Israeli occupying forces. Clearly, these illegal acts are criminal, and any attempt to justify them serves only to highlight the occupying Power's determination to walk the path of violence rather than one of peace and cooperation

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to which the Palestinian leadership, along with the international community, are fully committed.

The protection of civilians has been repeatedly declared a priority issue of the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council. Regrettably, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Palestinian civilian population has never received such protection and remains highly vulnerable and exposed to the lethal force continuously unleashed by Israel, the occupying Power. Palestinian civilians continue to be killed, wounded and maimed by the Israeli occupying forces on a daily basis, and we call on the international community to hold Israel accountable for such grave breaches and to bring a halt to all of its violations of international law. The failure of the international community to uphold its responsibility to protect Palestinian civilians has undeniably reinforced Israel's impunity, permitting it to continue committing extrajudicial killings and using excessive force against a defenceless civilian population under the pretext of security or "counter-terrorism", while it continues to ignore its very presence as an occupying Power and to ignore its responsibilities under international law in this regard.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 380 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 29 December 2010 (A/ES-10/507-S/2010/673), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dr. Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations